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# CHAPTER 8

## **GENERAL HEALTH, MEDICAL AND SAFETY**

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# CHAPTER 8

## **GENERAL HEALTH, MEDICAL AND SAFETY**

### **8.00 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter covers personal health and safety issues and unique environmental health issues not associated with health and safety regulations.

### **8.01 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide information regarding policies, procedures, and work practices that are not commonly known departmental regulations and/or standards.

### **8.02 BACKGROUND**

Policies, procedures, and work practices presented in this chapter are based on a variety of sources including; Director's Policies, Deputy Directives, Governor's Executive Orders, Department of General Services (DGS) Management Memos, Department of Rehabilitation - The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), State Administrative Manual (SAM), and information from the State Department of Health Services, and the State Medical Officer. Additional information has been obtained from county departments of health and agriculture, and/or college or university publications.

### **8.03 SMOKING POLICY**

#### **Smoking is prohibited in Caltrans buildings and vehicles.**

Deputy Directive (DD)-06-R2, revised May 2, 2007, established the following smoking policy:

Smoking is prohibited in all State-owned and State-occupied space within a building, or State-leased and State-occupied space within a building, or within 20 feet of doorways, operable windows and air intake structures. Furthermore, smoking is prohibited in all State-owned or leased vehicles and equipment. Privately owned vehicles used for State business must be smoke-free anytime a non-smoker is a passenger.

Specific outdoor smoking areas are not established but appropriate smoke litter receptacles should be provided outside State-owned or leased buildings for smoking refuse. Signs are to be clearly posted to inform employees and the public of smoking prohibitions.

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Caltrans residential tenants are permitted to establish a smoking policy within their primary residential space but are encouraged to maintain the Caltrans no smoking policy.

This policy is based upon guidelines established by State Administrative Manual (SAM) 1330.5 and 4102 regarding smoking policies derived from Governor's Executive Order W-42-93 and Assembly Bill 291.

State building is defined as a building owned or leased and occupied by the State.

Within a building includes any area enclosed by the outermost walls of the building, such as, atriums, balconies, stairwells, and similar building features.

Residential space is defined as a private living area and excludes common areas, i. e., lounges and rest rooms that are a structural part of a building (such as a dormitory).

Vehicles and equipment are any motor vehicle as defined in Section 415 of the California Vehicle Code (CVC). The prohibition also includes all State-owned mobile equipment including light and heavy duty trucks, cargo and passenger vans, buses, and any other mobile equipment with an enclosed driver/passenger compartment regardless of ventilation.

Managers and supervisors shall enforce and initiate appropriate disciplinary action whenever they observe any violation of the smoking policy.

#### **8.04 FIREARMS AND WEAPONS POLICY**

DD-22, effective June 3, 1994, established the following firearms and weapons prohibition policy based on Section 171b of the California Penal Code. The DD states, **"It is illegal for any employee or member of the public to bring a firearm or weapon into a Caltrans building or vehicle."**

The policy applies to all Caltrans-owned buildings, leased spaces, space within buildings shared with other departments or agencies, Caltrans vehicles and motorized equipment, and DGS fleet vehicles used by Caltrans employees. Prohibited weapons include but are not limited to the following:

1. Any firearm loaded or unloaded.
2. Dangerous weapons including switchblade knives, clubs, metal knuckles, etc. (A complete list is contained in Penal Code Section 12020.)
3. BB or pellet guns, CO2 or spring action, spot marker or paint ball guns.
4. All knives with a fixed or fixable blade exceeding four inches.
5. Tear gas weapons, taser guns, or stun guns (includes pepper spray and mace spray, or similar devices).
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If there is information that a person is in violation of this policy, a supervisor, building manager and/or building security guard shall be notified. The building manager and/or security personnel shall contact the California Highway Patrol (CHP) or local law enforcement as deemed necessary. Employees should refrain from attempting to retrieve or confiscate weapons.

**Note:** Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Chief, Headquarters Operations Security Program in Sacramento (916) 654-3701.

## **8.05 EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

General Industry Safety Orders, Section 3220 - EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN requires all Caltrans facilities, including leased or rented space, to have written emergency action plans. These plans shall be available and shall establish a continuous state of readiness and preparedness for protection of employees during emergencies.

### **Content and Scope of Emergency Action Plans**

Development and updating of emergency action plans shall be the responsibility of the facility managers and/or building managers. Annual reviews and updates shall be performed (or when a change in a process warrants).

The purpose of emergency action plans is to provide written instructions that will help to protect employees during emergencies. Plans must include the following minimum requirements:

- Emergency evacuation route assignments;
- Procedures to account for all employees\* before and after evacuation;
- Procedures for those who remain to operate critical plant equipment;
- An established fire alarm system (may be an alarm or a procedure);
- Procedures to respond to incidents of workplace violence; and
- Procedures to respond to personal injury associated with incidents of crime in the workplace.

Emergency action plans should also include details showing the location of the following:

- |                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Medical and first aid supplies; | • Evacuation routes;            |
| • Special needs facilities;       | • Emergency lighting;           |
| • Fire extinguishers;             | • Shelters, if appropriate; and |
| • Command center, if appropriate; | • Hazardous materials.          |

\* Provisions for emergency preparedness and evacuation procedures for persons who may need special assistance and persons with disabilities are included in Section 8.06 below.

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Information regarding the particular alarm system that may be in-place at a facility and what employees can expect when the alarm is activated should be included in the Emergency Action Plan.

Building Managers shall distribute emergency action plans covering each building under their jurisdiction to all supervisors, managers, and essential personnel, i.e., evacuation and first aid team members.

### **Fire Extinguishers**

Employees are *not* required to fight fires and should evacuate the building immediately in case of a fire.

Caltrans policy covering the use of portable fire extinguisher by employees is as follows:

- **Call or have someone call the fire department or 911 before using the fire extinguisher;**
- **Only trained personnel\* should attempt to extinguish a fire;**
- **Trained employees should only attempt to extinguish small fires that can be contained safely; and**
- **Fire fighting efforts must be terminated when it becomes obvious that there is danger of harm from smoke, heat, or flames.**

\* A trained individual shall be familiar with the use of a fire extinguisher and confident in his/her ability to cope with the hazards of a fire.

Supervisors and District/Headquarters building managers are responsible to ensure that portable fire extinguishers are properly located, maintained, and inspected in compliance with applicable local and/or State fire regulations. Fire extinguishers should be located in areas that:

- Provide uniform distribution
- Are accessible and visible
- Are free from blockage by storage and equipment
- Are near normal paths of travel
- Are near entrance and exit doors
- Are free from potential physical damage

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## **8.06 EVACUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYEES THAT NEED ASSISTANCE**

This section provides information for facility managers and building managers regarding maintaining a continuous state of readiness to protect persons with disabilities and others who may need special assistance during an emergency. These instructions are based on ADA-established standards that require every employer to provide for and recognize that persons with disabilities and others may need special assistance during emergencies.

Supervisors are responsible to maintain a copy of the Form ADM 0131, EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION INFORMATION at the work-site. The form provides space for employee to inform of their need for assistance during an emergency evacuation. The form provides for a “YES” or “NO” answer only. The form shall not state the reason for the assistance. The request for assistance and the disclosure of any specific medical or personal information is voluntary and shall remain confidential.

This section also provides instructions for supervisors and emergency response team members regarding emergency evacuation procedures.

### **People With Disabilities**

Employees with disabilities often have special needs during emergencies. Employees needing assistance are encouraged to inform their supervisor and emergency response personnel of their specific need(s) and should provide this information before an emergency arises. The privacy of

**Note:** Some individuals may be reluctant to have their disability or needs identified and their rights must be respected.

Following a request for special assistance, the supervisor shall arrange for the building manager and members of the local emergency evacuation team to contact the employee to discuss the best way to provide the needed assistance.

### **Evacuation Procedures for Employees Who Require Special Assistance**

Personnel who develop and write evacuation plans for persons with disabilities must understand that each person’s capabilities and limitations are unique. To be most effective, each emergency action plan must be designed to meet the needs of the individual.

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To provide for safe evacuation of persons with disabilities and others who may need special assistance during an emergency, the following action steps shall be included in all emergency action plans:

**Detection:** The detection of emergencies is generally accomplished by automatic alarm systems that usually include an audible alarm/public address (PA) system, though others may be initiated by whistles, alarms, horns, etc.

**Notification:** Notification informs all employees of an emergency. Notification of an emergency by an audible alarm is usually sufficient to evacuate a building. Employees with hearing impairments may require alternative alarm methods. Facility managers and supervisors must be informed of work locations of employees with hearing impairments before an emergency exists. Alarm systems should be audible AND visible (using flashing lights or similar visual devices) to help hearing impaired persons to evacuate.

Some facilities have a manual pull station that generally include an “In Case of Fire Break Glass” device as part of the alarm system. If this detection system is used, it must accommodate persons with physical and/or mobility impairments.

**Evacuation:** People must be able to exit a building to protective exit-ways safely. Evacuation procedures must accommodate persons with mobility, hearing, sight, or temporary disabilities. Some employees that do not appear to have limitations may also require special assistance.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-** To comply with the ADA Classification of Disabilities, provisions for the following shall be included in all emergency action plans.

#### **Mobility Impairment**

Individuals with varying degrees of mobility impairments, ranging from walking slowly to use of wheelchairs and other prosthetic devices.

#### **Hearing Impairments**

Individuals with hearing impairments may require visual aids during an evacuation.

#### **Visually Impaired**

Individuals with visual impairments may require special assistance. Managers and supervisors are encouraged to provide an advance walk-through of the evacuation routes and to discuss the assistance available to them during an emergency.

#### **Temporary Impairments**

Individuals with temporary impairments (e.g., recovering from traumatic injuries, a broken leg, sprained ankle or surgeries) may tire easily and may need special assistance or more time to evacuate.

**Known Medical Conditions**

Individuals with known medical conditions such as respiratory disorders or pregnancy may need special assistance, e.g., physical body support or more time to evacuate.

**Mental Impairments**

Individuals with mental impairments may become confused when challenged with the unusual activity during an emergency, e.g., lose their sense of direction or require emergency directions to be broken down into simplified steps or basic concepts.

**Other**

Some individuals may panic or freeze during emergencies and may need to be calmly and slowly spoken to while assisting them to evacuate.

**Visitors**

The possibility that visitors may be at a Caltrans work-site during an emergency should be included in emergency action plans. Visitors may have small children with them and may require extra time to evacuate.

**ASSISTANCE TECHNIQUES TO USE DURING EVACUATION**

The following techniques should be followed whenever assistance is provided to persons with disabilities during evacuation:

**Mobility Impairment**

Persons in wheelchairs may be able to assist themselves. Some wheelchair users are trained in special techniques to transfer from one chair to another. Ask the employee how best to assist him/her. Someone using a crutch or a cane might be able to negotiate stairs independently. It is best not to interfere with a person's movement unless he/she asks for help.

**Hearing Impairment**

A person with a hearing impairment may need special notification of an emergency, such as:

- Flicking the lights on and off when entering the work area or a gentle tap on his/her shoulder;
- Establishing eye contact with the individual, even if an interpreter is present;
- Using facial expressions and hand gestures as visual cues;
- Checking to see if you have been understood and repeat if necessary;
- Written communications may be especially important if you are unable to understand the individual's speech; and
- Providing a flashlight to signal his/her location if he/she becomes separated from the person(s) providing assistance or the rescue team, and to facilitate lip-reading in the dark.



**Visual Impairment**

Persons with vision impairment may need special notification of an emergency, such as:

- Announcing your presence when entering the work area;
- Speaking naturally and directly to the individual;
- Offering assistance (allow the person to explain what help is needed);
- Describing in advance the action to be taken;
- Guiding the individual to the exit (grasp his/her arm or shoulder or allow them to grasp yours);
- If leading several persons with visual impairments at the same time, ask them to hold each others' hands (this same technique should be used with normal vision persons if in a dark room or hallway, etc.); and
- Making sure that individuals with impaired vision are not "abandoned" after exiting the building, but are led to a place of safety where colleague(s) shall remain with them until the emergency is over.

When assisting owners of guide dogs, plan for the dog to be evacuated with the owner.

The dog is on duty when wearing its harness; if you do not want the dog to guide its owner, have the person remove the dog's harness.

**Learning Disabilities**

Persons with learning disabilities may have difficulty recognizing an emergency. Consider the following when assisting persons with learning disabilities:

- Their visual perception of written instructions or hand signs may be confused;
- Their sense of direction may be limited, requiring someone to show them the exit;
- Their ability to understand is often more developed than their vocabulary; and
- Persons with these types of impairments should be treated as adults who happen to have a cognitive or learning disability.

Persons who may panic or show signs of fear during emergencies may also have difficulty responding to direction and may need special understanding.